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Shannon Hicks/Newtown Bee via The Associated Press

Shattered



Christian Abraham/Staff photographer

Mourners attend Friday evening's vigil at St. Rose of Lima Church in Newtown for the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting victims. Top, students are led out of the school Friday morning.

THE DEATH TOLL

A gunman at Sandy Hook Elementary School killed 20 students, 6 staff, his mother and himself Friday.

THE SHOOTER

Adam Lanza, a neighbor said, was a 'reserved' and shy youth who appeared to be 'troubled.'

THE VICTIMS

Dawn Lafferty Hochsprung was called a perfect fit to lead the Newtown school.

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POST

TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN

SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

Massacre claims 27 victims

Administrator, teachers credited with saving lives

By Michael P. Mayko

A season of peace and joy instantly turned into a nightmare of horror and grief Friday when a heavily armed madman opened fire inside the Sandy Hook Elementary School, killing 20 young students and six staffers before turning a gun on himself.

Adam Lanza, 20, had earlier killed his mother — a teacher at the kindergarten through-fourth-grade school in this picturesque New England town — and then drove her car to the school armed with two powerful handguns and a semi-automatic assault rifle, launching his bloody rampage about 9:30 a.m., authorities said.

The victims included Principal Dawn Hochsprung and Mary Sherlach, who spent her last 18 years as the school psychologist.

Nancy Lanza, who often substituted at the school, was found dead later in her home at 36 Yoganada Drive.

The guns, a Glock and a Sig Sauer pistol found near his body and a semi-automatic Bushmaster rifle, were purchased legally by the dead mother, according to reports.

“It’s a horrific scene,” said a shaken State Police Lt. J. Paul Vance, while briefing media gathered at what is now the nation’s second-worst school shooting behind the Virginia Tech mass murder in 2007, when 32 were killed. “We’ve never seen anything like this. It’s so tragic.”

Parents praised an administrator who turned on the intercom, giving teachers seconds to prepare for the impending terror coming down the hall.

Kaitlin Roig, a first-grade teacher, lived through the horror that began when she heard shots during a meeting - and was hailed as a hero for shepherding 15 young students to safety.

She told ABC News she rushed to her classroom, locked the door and barricaded her students in a bathroom.

“I’m hearing the gunfire in the hallway, and in my mind I’m thinking I’m the first classroom ... I’m thinking we’re next,” Roig told ABC’s Diane Sawyer in an emotional interview Friday.

Yet she summoned her strength, turned to her students and told those who believed in God to pray and the others to think happy thoughts.

“I said, ‘There are bad guys out there now. We need to wait for the good guys,’ ” she said.

“The kids were being so good,” she said. “They asked, ‘Can we go see if anyone is out there?’ ‘I just want Christmas. I don’t want to die, I just want to have Christmas.’ I said, ‘You’re going to have Christmas and Hanukkah.’ ”

One student claimed to know karate. “It’s OK. I’ll lead the way out,” the student said.

When children started crying, Roig said, “I would take their face and tell them: ‘It’s going to be OK, show me your smile.’ ”

When they told her they wanted to hug their moms, she hugged them and told them she loved them very much. That everything would be OK.

“I wanted them to know someone loved them, and I wanted that to be one of the last things they heard, not the gunfire ...” Roig told Sawyer. “I didn’t think we were going to live.”

By 10 a.m. media outlets from across the country and around the world descended on this quiet 300-year-old



First responders and families converge at Sandy Hook Fire Department near Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown. Photo by Morgan Kaolian/AEROPIX

community of stately homes, church spires and a towering iconic flagpole in the town center.

Now Newtown is world-wide news, but not the kind of news any community wants.

It will forever be remembered as the town where the nation’s second-worst school shooting occurred.

And coming just 11 days before Christmas and on the sixth day of Hanukkah, the tragedy ripped through the hearts of its 27,000 residents.

Grief counselors provided by Danbury Hospital, members of the FBI Crisis Management team, area priests, rabbis and ministers flooded the town. Some were turned away from the school.

By 6 p.m., hundreds of townspeople, including parents like Lilia and Vinny Alvarez and David Connors, sought comfort and flocked to St. Rose of Lima Church where a Catholic Mass was being offered and where 26 candles — one for each victim — brightly lit the altar.

The Alvarезes walked solemnly inside. They were there to thank God that their Cynthia, an 8-year-old Sandy Hook third-grader, was safe, although traumatized after hearing gunshots.

They heard Msgr. Robert Weiss urge attendees to gaze at the night sky and see how much brighter it appeared.

“There are 26 new stars,” he said.

Outside even the church grounds were brighter, lit by dozen of candles set up in a shrine.

There, nearly a thousand people walked aimlessly, asking questions and hoping for answers.

Kate Twohy, 75, was telling anyone who would listen that “violence like this has a seed and that seed is planted by the media and video games ... It’s almost like spoon-feeding them pablum and oatmeal.”

She circulated a petition calling for an end to violence and violent games and violent shows. Nearby, a group held hands and sang “Silent Night.”

Lilia Alvarez called her daughter’s teacher, who she knew only as Ms. Martin, “a true hero.”

“When she heard the commotion, she locked the door, told all the kids to get in the corner, duck down and stay there,” Alvarez said.

Martin wasn’t the only hero.

Others said Carol Wexler and Abby Clements, two second-grade teachers, herded their children into closets. Clements even grabbed students from the hallways, pulled them into her room and locked the door.

Connors, whose triplets attend the school, praised the administrator who turned on

the intercom, plugging all the classrooms into the impending horror and providing teachers a quick chance to take action.

“That probably saved a lot of lives,” he said.

The Alvarez family also thanked God.

“God protected my child. I am here to thank him that I am able to hug her tonight,” Lilia said. “I am also here to pray for a lot of others parents who won’t be able to hug their children.”

GRIEVING

Many of those parents were still at the Sandy Hook firehouse, just down the street from the school.

Children were brought there in long lines, hands on the shoulder in front, eyes closed as they walked in darkness past the bloody carnage to sunlight and safety outside. They were led down Dickinson Drive to the nearby Sandy Hook firehouse.

That’s where parents like Andrew Paley were told to go. That’s where counselors like Rabbi Shaul Praver of Congregation Adath Israel in Newtown and Msgr. Weiss of St. Rose gathered. And that’s where victims’ families waited to see their children.

Paley described the scene inside as one of “controlled chaos.”

“Parents were clamoring to find their children,” he

said. “Teachers, police and emergency crew workers did an excellent job in keeping people as calm as possible.”

Eventually, children were brought into a central room where they ran to their parents, who were asked to sign them out. That’s where he found his twin 9-year-old sons, Benjamin and Ethan.

Vance, the state police spokesman, said this was done “to account for every single student at the school.” He said they also needed to determine who was absent.

And they used this to help identify who might be victims.

Initially, a source said the examiners decided not to lay out the bodies, instead asking parents what their child was wearing. Many, so upset, were unable to remember.

So they asked for descriptions. They separated the bodies into boys and girls.

Parents were waiting to be called in one at a time.

“The anxiety was so thick you could cut it with a knife,” Praver said. “Then the waiting started.”

For 20 parents there would no tearful reunion and no child running to them reaching out with widespread arms.

“The families are broken,” said Weiss, who said a half-dozen of the victims attended his church. “Many are staying at the firehouse overnight. They are still hoping against hope this did not happen.”

For them, there will be no holiday season this year, maybe never again.

“It’s a small town,” Paley said. “Everybody knows each other. I was crying and I’m not someone who cries often.”

LANZA

At 9 a.m., the scene was much different. Students were beginning their day. Teachers were urging them to quiet down and focus on their lessons.

Then just before 9:30 a.m., Lanza, a one-time honors student, was buzzed into the school and began shooting.

At the time, Hochsprung and Sherlach were in a routine meeting when they heard gunshots, an eyewitness told The Wall Street Journal.

The pair rushed to the noise, according to Diane Day, a therapist who works at the school and was in the meeting, the paper reported on its website.

“They didn’t think twice about confronting or seeing what was going on,” Day said.

Both were killed by the gunfire that followed.

Lanza kept firing, killing a teacher in front of her students and shooting young children to death as they cowered in fear.

Robert Licata told ABC News that his son was in that classroom, grabbed a bunch of friends and ran out the door.

Another girl who was in the gym recalled hearing “like, seven loud booms.”

“The gym teacher told us to go in a corner, so we all huddled and I kept hearing these booming noises,” the girl, who was not identified by name, told NBC News. “We all started — well, we didn’t scream; we started crying, so all the gym teachers told us to go into the office where no one could find us.”

POLICE ARRIVE

Police radios broadcast the first word of the shooting at 9:36.

“Sandy Hook School. Caller is indicating she thinks there’s someone shooting in the building,” a Newtown dispatcher radioed, according to a tape posted on the paper’s website.

Shortly after the 911 call,

Newtown police arrived and burst into the school. Once they saw the bodies, they called for additional help from surrounding towns and the State Police.

At 9:46 a.m., an anguished voice from the school reported “I’ve got bodies here. Need ambulances.”

Vance said all available troopers, even those off duty, were dispatched to the scene along with their K-9 corps, the bomb squad and the Western and Central District Major Crime Squads.

Later, agents from the FBI and U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives would arrive.

A source said officers fired no shots and that Lanza took his own life.

Pursuit then turned to recovery.

Vance said police went room to room and into “every nook and cranny,” finding horrified, traumatized little boys and girls hiding under desks, inside closets and behind book shelves. They also found bodies.

“It was a very, very difficult scene,” said Vance.

THE SHOOTER

Lanza’s mother, Nancy, and father, Peter, divorced in 2009 after 28 years of marriage, according to court documents. Previously, the couple worked out a joint custody agreement that allowed Adam to live with his mother.

Beth Israel, who lives near the Lanza family, described the shooter as a “reserved” and shy youth who appeared to be “troubled.”

“His mother would always say how smart he was,” said Israel, whose daughter was friendly with Lanza when they attended elementary school.

An older brother, Ryan, who attended Quinnipiac University and lives in Hoboken, N.J., was erroneously identified as the shooter early on. He later tweeted his innocence but was being questioned by authorities.

Peter Lanza, who lives on Bartina Lane in Stamford with his new wife, was unaware of the shooting or his son’s involvement when approached by a Hearst Media reporter. The face of the vice president of taxes at GE Energy Financial Services turned ashen and the voice declined comment.

VICTIMS

Hochsprung was remembered as “always smiling, always optimistic.”

“She didn’t sit in her office,” said Melody Montgomery, who worked as an eighth grade history teacher at Rogers Park Middle School in Danbury when Hochsprung was an assistant principal there. “She loved being creative and hands on. She always had her door open ... and had a great smile.”

Hochsprung spent six years as an administrator in Danbury before moving onto Bethlehem, Woodbury and finally Newtown in 2010. She was remembered for running a sock hop every year and dancing in her 1950s garb.

“She was everything you’d want in an educator,” said William Glass, Danbury’s deputy superintendent.

Sherlach, who lived in Trumbull with her husband, William, was the school psychologist for nearly 20 years.

“If there ever was a person by qualification and personality to work with children, to be a school psychologist, it was Mary,” said John Redd, Newtown’s former superintendent.

Staff writers Anne Amato, Dirk Perreford, Dan Tepfer, Maggie Gordon and Bob Miller and The Associated Press contributed to this report.

TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN

Reporter broke news to father of suspect

By Maggie Gordon

STAMFORD — Peter Lanza drove up to his home, a brick ranch on a quiet street, a few hours after his son allegedly killed 26 people and himself at a Newtown elementary school and moments after police left his property.

“Is there something I can do for you?” he asked me, after stopping his blue Mini Cooper in his driveway and rolling down the window. He wore a blue-and-white striped button-down shirt, his hair neatly parted to the side.

I told him I was a reporter for the Stamford Advocate, and I was surprised that no click of recognition flashed across his face. So I continued, explaining that I’d been told someone at his address had been linked to the shootings in Newtown.

His expression twisted from patient, to

surprise to horror; it was obvious that this moment, shortly after 1:30 p.m. Friday, was the first time he had considered his family could have been involved. He quickly declined to comment, rolled up the window, parked in the right side of the two-car garage and closed the door.

Moments later he sat at a table in the front of his three-bedroom house, a phone to his left ear and a palm to his right cheek.

Lanza, a vice president of taxes for GE Energy Financial Services, is the father of the alleged shooter, Adam Lanza, 20, who is also suspected of killing his mother, Nancy.

Peter and Nancy Lanza divorced in 2009 due to “irreconcilable differences,” according to court records in Stamford. The couple had been married for 28 years. About nine months after Nancy filed for the divorce, the two worked out an in agreement that included joint custody of their son Adam, who was 17 at the time. As part of their parental agreement, Adam was to live primarily with his mother, with Peter permitted “liberal visitation and vacations.”

Peter Lanza now lives on Bartina Lane in

the Westover section of Stamford. Lanza has worked as a tax specialist in the financial industry and served as an adjunct professor at Northeastern University in Boston since 1995 and has taught classes on tax partnerships at Fairfield University.

Bartina Lane is a small street, connecting West Hill and Westover Roads in one of Stamford’s more well-to-do corners. Most days, the traffic is few and far between, and in the summer some of the elementary-school-age children set up a lemonade stand for their neighbors. It’s the kind of place where the neighbors know each other, and everyone keeps their light on.

According to a neighbor, Lanza and his wife were married fairly recently. While his wife has lived in the neighborhood for at least a decade, Lanza only moved in a few years ago, at about the time they got married.

“I literally know nothing about them.

We’ve been here 10 years, and they’ve been here longer than that; they’re just not very friendly,” said the neighbor, who asked not to be identified.

The woman was shocked — to the point of

tears — to hear that her neighbor across the street had a connection to the tragedy she was watching unfold on TV.

“I wouldn’t have thought the police would be here for that house. Not that house,” she said.

Police, who said they were at the home to conduct a “welfare check” hours after the shootings, returned to the scene with the FBI and State Police Friday evening. As darkness fell, flashes of blue and red lit up the block, and news vans peppered the curb along the once-quiet street.

While the road was taped off during the investigation Friday night, Geralyn Petrafesa, who has lived on the street for 14 years, said the lights were never on in the Lanza home, which was one of the few on the block not decorated for Christmas.

“It’s like 9/11 all over again,” Petrafesa said of the shootings and the connection to her neighborhood. “You panic. You just want to grab your kids.”

And like 9/11, Petrafesa said her life would once again never be the same.

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Peter Lanza



Christian Abraham/Staff photographer

After a shooting at Sandy Hook School nearby, a grief stricken couple leave the fire station on Riverside Drive in Newtown on Friday.

Darkness comes to Sandy Hook

By Brian Koonz

NEWTOWN — It was the usual parade of kids passing through the doors of Sandy Hook Elementary School on Friday morning.

There were backpacks of every hue, a few untied shoelaces, and 10 days before Christmas Eve, the wondrous anticipation of the holidays.

At a school where the front sign reads, “Visitors Welcome,” there was a palpable eagerness for the day, that shared innocence of little children in a little school.

Across town, Adam Lanza, a 20-year-old Newtown man, had just shot and killed his mother at her home at 36 Yogananda St., police said. Afterward, Lanza slid behind the wheel of his mother’s car and headed for Sandy Hook School, where she worked as a teacher’s aide.

In the time it took Lanza to drive a few miles, the Sandy Hook kids tucked their backpacks into cubbies along the wall and sat at their desks, ready to learn, ready to shift to the carpet for a story.

But then, shortly after 9:30 a.m., the world, and that shared innocence, shattered forever at Sandy Hook School.

Police said Lanza opened fire on two classrooms connected by a bathroom and a blueprint of evil. The shooting was limited to one section of the school. And then, the massacre was over — terribly over — almost as quickly as it began.

When the awful count-

ing finally stopped at Sandy Hook School, 20 children and six school employees were dead. And people around the world mourned them like they were their own.

Because they were.

As the 911 calls started flooding the Newtown Police Department, it became apparent this shooting was not an isolated incident, but rather a sweeping spray of death. It was simply too big and too heinous for one agency to handle.

The State Police answered the call for help. So did the FBI. So did ambulance crews from across the region, along with Newtown’s bravest from the Sandy Hook Volunteer Fire & Rescue Co. next door.

As police and teachers led kids out of school and across the driveway, first responders turned the firehouse into a staging area and a safe haven.

Police cars were already screaming toward Sandy Hook School with sirens drowning out the wails that were sure to follow on a day like this. The state police SWAT team arrived about 9:45 a.m.

An hour or so after the first shots rang out, the parents began arriving — in frantic, frenetic waves on Riverside Road. They threw their cars into park on the side of the road, in front yards, anywhere they could find a place. And they ran. With all their hearts.

There were mothers in baseball caps and fleece jackets. There were fathers in blue



Frank Beccera Jr./The Journal News via AP

Parents walk away from Sandy Hook School with their children following a shooting at the school in Newtown on Friday.

jeans and sweatshirts. All of them, without exception, ran toward the firehouse with one thing on their minds.

The safety of their children.

For some, it was the most glorious gift of their lives. For others, it was the worst kind of heartache, the kind of misery that crumples a parent in cruel, sobbing heaves.

About 10:30 a.m., police reported that the shooter — first named as Ryan Lanza and later corrected to Adam Lanza — was dead.

Shortly after 11:30 a.m., the state police SWAT team regrouped at the firehouse. Despite wearing camouflage from head to toe, these highly

trained officers could not hide the look of horror on their faces.

At noon, a press conference was scheduled at Treadwell Park, just around the corner from Sandy Hook School. The police and elected officials didn’t have much to say, but like the SWAT team members, their faces said it all.

Back at Yogananda Street, an upscale neighborhood in Sandy Hook with beautiful homes on large lots, a black armored truck with SWAT stamped on the side rolled down the street about 2:30 p.m.

“I just happened to look out my window and I saw it,”

said Lee Shull, who lives on Charter Ridge Drive, the next street over from Yogananda. “I’m afraid to text friends who have young kids at the school to see if they’re OK because you never know.” The aching ripples of this nightmare reached Washington, D.C., in no time. By midafternoon, President Barack Obama, the father of two daughters, addressed the nation.

“The majority of those who died today were children, beautiful little kids between the ages of 5 and 10 years old. They had their entire lives ahead of them: birthdays, graduations, weddings, kids of their own,” Obama told the world, pausing several times to collect words that don’t exist.

Not now. Not ever. Never mind that Obama was briefed about the shooting about 10 a.m. When something like this happens, all the time in the world can’t digest it.

Shortly after 2 p.m., police said a body was discovered at 36 Yogananda St. An ambulance pulled underneath the yellow police tape soon after and didn’t leave the neighborhood for nearly an hour.

Just after 3:30 p.m., Gov. Dannel P. Malloy joined local, state and federal officials at Treadwell Park with the police. Malloy gazed out into a parking lot full of TV trucks from across the Northeast with satellite dishes and fancy antennas pointed at the sky as if they were searching for answers, too.

There were also a handful of Spanish-speaking TV reporters doing live shots from the park, which is usually a place for swimming lessons, soccer games and parties underneath the big wooden pavilion.

Instead, Treadwell Park had suddenly become triage for everyone wondering why a man would carry guns into an elementary school and open fire.

State police spokesman Lt. J. Paul Vance took several questions from the media, but he couldn’t — and often wouldn’t — release information that would compromise the investigation or the humanity accorded to the families of these victims.

Vance promised to hold another news conference an hour or so later and he did. The details were still scarce, but the magnitude of this tragedy continued to grow, even for seasoned law enforcement officers like Vance. “It’s a horrific scene,” Vance said. “We have never experienced anything like this.”

As the sun fell behind the horizon, word spread through Newtown that a number of vigils were planned Friday night. Perhaps the largest and most visible was at St. Rose of Lima Church.

The police cars, the yellow tape, the weeping and remorse, all of it remained through the night and deep into so many hearts.

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TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN



Ned Gerard/Staff photographer

An ambulance leaves Yogananda Street in Newtown on Friday where one adult was found dead in a home following the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Reported shooter appeared ‘troubled’

By Dirk Perrefort

NEWTOWN — The man who authorities believe unleashed a bloody rampage at Sandy Hook Elementary School on Friday was an honors student who was described a “socially awkward” youth.

Several sources have identified Adam Lanza as the 20-year-old man responsible for the deaths of 20 children and six adults at the school in a horrific scene that gripped the nation.

State Police, who as of late Friday had yet to identify the shooter by name, said he was found dead in the school. Sources cited by The Associated Press said it was a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

A woman who lives near the Lanza family said Lanza was a “reserved” and shy youth who appeared to be “troubled.”

“His mother would always say how smart he was,” said Beth Israel, who lives in the neighborhood and whose daughter was friends with Lanza while attending elementary school.

She added that Lanza, who was listed as receiving “high honors” while attending the ninth grade at Newtown High School in May 2007, may have had a developmental disability.

Lanza’s parents, Nancy and Peter Lanza, were divorced in 2009 after 28 years of marriage due to “irreconcilable differences,” according to court documents.

About nine months after Nancy Lanza filed for the divorce, the couple worked out an agreement that included joint custody of Adam Lanza, who was 17 at the time, although he was to live primarily with his mother, the records state.

The divorce filings indicated that Adam Lanza had lived in Sandy Hook since his birth.

A source told Hearst Connecticut Newspapers that Nancy Lanza was a substitute teacher at the elementary school, but was not at work on Friday when the shooting occurred.

The Associated Press reported that Nancy Lanza was found dead in her home.

State and local police blocked off the neighborhood surrounding a house



Contributed Photo

A photo from ABCNews.com shows a young Adam Lanza

in Newtown Friday on Yogananda Street that local property records state is owned by Nancy Lanza.

While State Police spokesman Lt. J. Paul Vance confirmed there was one fatality in a location other than the school, he declined to identify the victim.

Officials cited by The Associated Press said Adam Lanza drove to the school in his mother’s car, and three guns were found at the scene.

Two handguns, a Glock and a Sig Sauer, were found inside the school, officials said, while a .223-caliber rifle was recovered from the back of a car in the school parking lot.

CNN, citing an unnamed law enforcement official, reported that Lanza entered the school building wearing “black battle fatigues and a military vest.”

Originally, sources had identified the shooter as Ryan Lanza, 24, Adam Lanza’s older brother who lives in Hoboken, N.J.

According to reports with NorthJersey.com, police surrounded a Hoboken apartment on Friday afternoon where the alleged shooter’s older brother lived before taking him into custody for questioning.

Ryan Lanza has a Facebook page that posted updates Friday afternoon that read “it wasn’t me” and “I was at work.”

Peter Lanza, a vice president of taxes for GE Energy Financial Services, declined to answer questions from reporters in front of his home in Stamford in the Westover section of the city.

Lanza has worked as tax specialist and had served as an adjunct professor at Northeastern University in Boston since 1995.

A neighbor said Peter



Dru Nadler/Hearst Connecticut Newspapers

Stamford Police check a home on Bartina Lane in Stamford belonging to Peter Lanza, the father of Adam Lanza, who was the alleged shooter at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown on Friday where 26 were killed, including 20 children.

Lanza had recently remarried.

According to court documents, Peter Lanza was required to send significant alimony payments to Nancy Lanza, including monthly payments of \$10,000 a month and increasing to a minimum of \$12,450 up until 2023.

The court documents list Peter Lanza’s gross weekly income as \$8,556 and that he was required to pay all of Adam Lanza’s college and graduate school expenses.

It wasn’t immediately clear, however, if Lanza was attending college at the time of the shooting.

Peter and Nancy Champion Lanza were married in 1981 in Kingston, N.H.

According to a report Friday on the website of the Tampa Bay Times, Nancy Lanza’s mother has a winter home in Brookville, Fla.

In the article, she acknowledged to a reporter over the phone that Adam and his brother Ryan are her grandchildren. Her Facebook page links to two sons, Jack and James Champion.

James Champion, who

lives in Kingston, N.H., where the Lanzas were married, is identified as a police officer. The Union Leader reported that he was “too distraught to comment” when reached by one of its reporters and that media arriving at his home were turned away by police.

Some of the early descriptions of Lanza are eerily similar to the two teenagers responsible for killing 13 people in April 1999, at Columbine High School in Colorado. Both Eric David Harris and Dylan Bennet Klebold, who also took their lives after the shooting rampage, were described as social outcasts who were troubled students and often the victims of bullies.

Harris and Klebold entered the Colorado school wearing black overcoats and were heavily armed in what was at the time the deadliest school shooting in the country’s history.

The shooter in the April 2007 Virginia Tech killings that claimed 32 lives, Seung-Hui Cho, was found in an independent review after the slayings to have shown signs of depression and



Lindsay Niegelberg/Staff photographer

Police confiscate a computer from the apartment of Ryan Lanza in Hoboken, N.J., on Friday.

isolation and occasional instances of aberrant behavior at the university.

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TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN

PRESIDENT OBAMA’S STATEMENT ON SHOOTING

“So our hearts are broken today — for the parents and grandparents, sisters and brothers of these little children, and for the families of the adults who were lost.”



Carolyn Kaster/Associated Press

President Barack Obama wipes his eye as he talks about the Newtown elementary school shooting, Friday in the White House briefing room in Washington.

HEARST NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON — Following is the text of the statement that President Obama read in the White House briefing room on Friday afternoon.

This afternoon, I spoke with Governor Malloy and FBI Director Mueller. I offered Governor Malloy my condolences on behalf of the nation, and made it clear he will have every single resource that he needs to investigate this heinous crime, care for the victims, counsel their families.

We’ve endured too many of these tragedies in the past few years. And each time I learn the news I react not as a president, but as anybody else would — as a parent. And that was especially true today. I know there’s not a parent in America who doesn’t feel the same overwhelming grief that I do.

The majority of those who died today were children — beautiful little kids between the ages of 5 and 10 years old. They had their entire lives ahead of them — birthdays,

graduations, weddings, kids of their own. Among the fallen were also teachers — men and women who devoted their lives to helping our children fulfill their dreams.

So our hearts are broken today — for the parents and grandparents, sisters and brothers of these little children, and for the families of the adults who were lost.

Our hearts are broken for the parents of the survivors as well, for as blessed as they are to have their children home tonight, they know that their children’s innocence has been torn away from them too early, and there are no words that will ease their pain.

As a country, we have been through this too many times. Whether it’s an elementary school in Newtown, or a shopping mall in Oregon, or a temple in Wisconsin, or a movie theater in Aurora, or a street corner in Chicago — these neighborhoods are our neighborhoods, and these children are our children. And we’re going to have to come together and take meaningful action

to prevent more tragedies like this, regardless of the politics.

This evening, Michelle and I will do what I know every parent in America will do, which is hug our children a little tighter and we’ll tell them that we love them, and we’ll remind each other how deeply we love one another. But there are families in Connecticut who cannot do that tonight. And they need all of us right now. In the hard days to come, that community needs us to be at our best as Americans. And I will do everything in my power as president to help.

Because while nothing can fill the space of a lost child or loved one, all of us can extend a hand to those in need — to remind them that we are there for them, that we are praying for them, that the love they felt for those they lost endures not just in their memories but also in ours.

May God bless the memory of the victims and, in the words of Scripture, heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds.



Michael Duffy/Staff photographer

This is the scene at Dickenson Road leading to Sandy Hook Elementary School after shootings at the school Friday.

Principal, school psychologist ran to help

‘They didn’t think twice’ about seeing what was going on

By Eileen FitzGerald

NEWTOWN — Those who knew Dawn Lafferty Hochsprung said she was a perfect fit to lead Sandy Hook Elementary School, where she took the helm in 2010.

It was the veteran educator’s goal to lead her own school.

The optimistic, always smiling Hochsprung was the first fatality identified Friday in the catastrophic shooting at the neighborhood school of 525 students in kindergarten through fourth grade.

By one eye-witness account, Hochsprung and school psychologist Mary Sherlach were in a routine meeting Friday around 9:30 a.m. when they heard gunshots.

They leaped out of their seats and ran out of the room toward the noise, said Diane Day, a therapist who works at the school and was in the meeting, The Wall Street Journal reported on its website.

“They didn’t think twice about confronting or seeing what was going on,” Day said.

By the time the shooting ended, the principal, school psychologist, four other adults and 20 students were dead; the shooter, also died at the scene.

Sherlach, 56, had been the school psychologist since 1994.

Former school superintendent John Reed, who knew her well, praised her Friday as a person of warmth, caring and intelligence

“If there ever was a person who, by qualifications and personality, was made to work with children, to be a school psychologist, it was Mary,” Reed said.

Sandy Hook, one of four elementary schools in town, has 29 classroom teachers and 16 specialty teachers and support staff.

Hochsprung was an energetic leader, who exuded love for her school and students, as evident in her frequent Tweets.

“Safety first at Sandy Hook... It’s a beautiful day for our annual evacuation drill,” Hochsprung wrote in an Oct. 17 tweet.

She was “everything you’d want in an educator,” said Danbury Deputy Superintendent William Glass, who hired Hochsprung as an assistant principal for Danbury in 1998.

“I was struck by her intellect and her ability to think through problems and come up with wonderful solutions,” he said.

Dawn Hochsprung’s husband, George Hochsprung, is a Danbury teacher of the gifted who she worked with for her five years at Rogers Park Middle School. The couple had five children in a blended family.

Dawn Hochsprung was



Newtown Bee photo/Eliza Hallabec

Dawn Hochsprung, Sandy Hook Elementary School principal. Danbury Deputy Superintendent William Glass received confirmation that Hochsprung was killed in the shooting at her school in Newtown on Friday.

a principal who “loved children,” said Donna Kowalski, who lives with her husband, Ken, in a neighborhood across the road from Sandy Hook school.

“It’s a shame,” Kowalski said. “Her main interest was those children. She

was an awesome woman. Very warm, and caring. She talked to you, not at you.”

Hochsprung, who was in her 40s, served in schools throughout the area during more than 20 years first as a special education teacher in New Milford and

Bridgeport and then an administrator in Danbury for six years.

For five years she was assistant principal of Danbury’s Rogers Park Middle School and from 2003-04, as an assistant principal of Danbury High School. She left Danbury to become principal of Bethlehem Elementary School from 2004-07 and then was principal at Mitchell Elementary School in Woodbury until her move to Newtown in 2010.

She had reached her goal — to have her own school.

Within a year, she won a school grant called Sharing the Dream from the National Association of Elementary School Principals to create global awareness in schools and international learning communities.

This past summer she had started a doctorate program in educational leadership at The Sage Colleges in Troy, N.Y.

“She was a principal you’d want your children to have,” said Lori V. Quigley, dean of the Esteves School of Education at Sage. “She was vibrant, full of life, and loved her school community — she was truly a caring administrator. She had enrolled in the doctoral program because of her desire to expand her school leadership expertise.”

James Schlegel, who was in the program with her, described her as a great school leader.

“Literally staring down the barrel of a gun, she

goes to the responsibility of protecting her children,” he said.

Glass said Hochsprung was the sort of educator who loved working directly with students.

“It was not unusual to see her down on the floor working with the students. She’d work shoulder-to-shoulder on her knees with the kids,” Glass said. “She loved to live life. They had a sailboat and would sail down to the Caribbean. They were not just little sails. She knew how to balance her professional life and personal life.”

Melody Montgomery, a retired eighth grade history teacher, worked with Hochsprung at Rogers Park and respected her.

“She didn’t sit in her office,” Montgomery said. “She loved being creative and hands-on. She always had her door open for people and she was always positive. She had a great smile.”

Barbara Durniak, of New Fairfield, was secretary for Hochsprung during her five years at Rogers Park.

“Dawn was a fine human being,” Durniak said through tears. “She loved kids and kids loved her. It’s a hell of a way for her to go. It’s overwhelming. She was lovely to look at, lovely to know. She knew her job and did her job well.”

Robert Miller and Scott Waldman contributed to this report.

TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN

School shootings far too common

By Bill Cummings

It has become a too familiar scene across the nation: a gunman rampaging through a suburban school or workplace, leaving death and grief behind.

On Friday, that terror came to Connecticut, and the state may never be the same.

The bodies of 20 young children, six adults and a shooter left in the hallways and rooms of Newtown's Sandy Hook Elementary School represent the second worst school shooting in American history. Only the 33 dead during the 2007 massacre at Virginia Tech is worse.

As shock swept across the state Friday, many found it hard to put thoughts into words. But at the same time, a statewide discussion about school safety and how much security is enough bubbled to the surface.

"If I hadn't been on the phone all day, I would have probably cried," said Stamford schools Superintendent Winifred Hamilton. "We have had better days."

"I mean, my God, these were kindergarten students," said state

Sen. Toni Boucher, R-Wilton, and a ranking member of the Legislature's Education Committee. "It's a type of horror... of historic proportions. Everyone is upset right now. It's like after 9/11."

Boucher said the time has come to talk about school security and whether metal detectors are appropriate and what types of check-in systems are warranted. "I tried to reassure one parent who called me today but I was thinking about what type of precautions this can elicit," she said.

The sad truth is massacres like the one on Friday have become common, experts say. And those who commit such crimes typically fall into two categories: the profoundly mentally ill or those holding a grievance, maybe from the loss of a job, a child-custody dispute, family issues, marital problems or lingering unemployment.

"It may take many weeks to find out the motivation," said Larry Barton, a professor at the American College, Bryn Mawr, Pa., and a threat assessment instructor for the FBI.

"Usually there are only two rea-

sons: profound mental illness or the grievance collector. I've been involved in 2,800 of these cases and without question the murder of 20 children and six adults is influenced by profound mental illness," Barton said, noting some shooters display both traits.

"Can you prevent this? No. But you can mitigate it. Seventy one percent of the perpetrators who harm in public have communicated their intentions before. You have to see the signs," Barton said, explaining that those signs are often sudden changes in behavior, strange online posts or disturbing statements to friends and relatives.

Connecticut can take some comfort in the fact that it's not alone. During the Columbine shootings in 1999, 12 high schools students and adults died and 21 were injured.

Earlier this year, a gunman dressed as a Batman character killed 12 and injured 58 during a rampage at a Colorado movie theater. In 1998, a disgruntled worker strolled into the Connecticut Lottery offices in Newington and killed four co-workers and himself.

There have also been murders at Connecticut schools. In 2009, a 20-year-old UConn football player was stabbed to death on campus. In 1985, a 13-year-old Portland student fatally shot a school custodian, wounded a principal and secretary and held a student hostage with a rifle.

Charles W. Steger, Virginia Tech's president, on Friday personally reacted to the Connecticut shootings.

"We know, from our experience, of the unending sorrow and horror that has now descended on Newtown," Steger said in a letter to Connecticut. "No words can express how they now feel over this senseless and insane tragedy. Our words seem so inadequate in light of their plight. We extend our deepest condolences, thoughts and prayers to the Newtown community as it begins to cope with their grief and blackness."

So what, if anything, can be done to prevent future tragedies?

Barton said less than five percent of school districts nationally have any type of electronic locking system for doors, such as buzzers to let people in or a badge system to iden-

tify employees. He said he was impressed that the Sandy Hook school had a buzzer system on its doors.

Reports on Friday indicated the shooter, whose mother apparently taught at the school, was known to school officials, so that's likely why he was let inside.

Hamilton, the Stamford school superintendent, said her schools have varying levels of security, from guards at high schools to doors at other schools equipped with cameras and buzzers.

"We have been putting safety protocols and procedures in place at all of our schools. We do regular sweeps to make sure doors are closed. Still, you can have all the security protocols, metal detectors and armed guards, but if someone is determined to do harm they will find a way," Hamilton said.

Boucher said the state is likely to now have a school security discussion. "There will be a desire for a response. For me, it will have to be how to better secure schools and whether metal detectors should be used and whether there is an outcry for gun control."



Christian Abraham/Staff photographer

Parents of Sandy Hook Elementary School students pick up their children from the nearby Sandy Hook firehouse after Friday's shooting.

For parents, moments of terror, relief

By Nanci G. Hutson

NEWTOWN — Therese Lestik held tight to the hand of her daughter, Ava, a Sandy Hook Elementary School kindergartner who escaped Friday's carnage, as she walked and talked on a cellphone on Riverside Drive.

Not far from the chaos, as other parents abandoned cars in the middle of the road and raced toward the scene, Lestik rushed to meet her husband. She arrived as a parade of black SWAT trucks and State Police cruisers roared up Philo Curtis Road.

"I'm in shock, like everyone else," Lestik said, as she walked with her daughter.

Their reunion — a quick, tight, roadside embrace — was one among the scenes of Friday's relief and horror.

Alberta Bajraliu said she lost her composure as she and her son pulled up to the school and spotted her daughter, Venesa, a 9-year-old, fourth-grader at Sandy Hook Elementary.

"I started to cry, and my daughter — she's there and she's so innocent," Bajraliu said.

Venesa said her art teacher shepherded students into the classroom after they heard multiple shots nearby.

Minutes later, she said, a group of "police officers" burst into the classroom and escorted them outside, instructing students to cover their eyes as they walked through the hallways.

Later, behind St. John's Episcopal Church, a police with rifles roamed a nearby backyard as one father, Richard Wilford, stood with his children, a 7-year-old son, Richie, and pre-school daughter, and spoke into the news microphones.

Richie stood close, but silent.

Clearly relieved, Wilford said he was startled by an automatic telephone alert from the district, saying Sandy Hook Elementary was in lockdown because of a shooting. He and his wife joined the throng that rushed to the school.

"What human being walks into an elementary school and starts shooting?" Wilford asked. "My son said he heard loud noises and was taken to a corner, and everyone was safe."

Wilford said no words "come close to describing the sheer terror that your child is in a place where there is violence, and you can't help protect them. You're powerless."

But he was quick to dispel any indictment of the school, the neighborhood or the community.

"The school isn't evil because someone did something evil," Wilford said. "... I love the people here. This is just a horrific incident perpetrated by an individual who doesn't play by the rules."

Holding the hands of his two children, Wilford walked amid long lines of police cars and media.

Wilford said he just wanted to go home and play football with his children in the backyard.

"My prayers are with all

the families," he said.

Lynn Wasik, her arms wrapped around the neck of her 8-year-old daughter, Alexis, a brown-haired, third-grader, said she didn't "even remember driving here."

For Alexis, the day began as any other, but during her reading lesson she heard police yelling, others stomping through the halls and even more footfalls on the roof.

Her teacher quickly closed the classroom door, shut down the blinds, shut off the lights and shepherded the class to a rear corner of the room. There they huddled together until they were told to "get out of the building, quick."

"I was kind of scared, and sick to my stomach," Alexis said.

"I don't want this to be real," her mother said. "My heart is in a million pieces."

Staff writer *Libor Jany* contributed to this story. nhutson@newtimes.com; 860-354-2274; <http://twitter.com/NTNanci>



Christian Abraham/Staff photographer

Parents and children leave Sandy Hook firehouse in Newtown, where they gathered for news after Friday's shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN



Christian Abraham/Staff photographer

People gather at St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church in Newtown for a vigil Friday after a mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

At vigil, hundreds mourn shooting victims

By Neil Vigdor
and John Pirro

NEWTOWN — Here, the landmarks are distinctly small town. A flagpole — now at half-staff. Edmond Town Hall, where \$2 buys admission to second-run movies.

But on Friday night, Newtown resembled communities whose names have become touchstones of tragedy: Columbine, Virginia Tech, Aurora.

St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church became a shrine to the 27 victims of mass shooting earlier in the day at Sandy Hook Elementary School — 20 of them children — that put this Danbury suburb in the collective prayers of a nation.

At least 2,000 people, many of them with their arms around their children, packed the parish for a memorial service and candle-light vigil.

“When I think I baptized some of these children,” Msgr. Robert Weiss, the church’s pastor, told the packed sanctuary during a homily.

The crowd outside the parish grew so large that worshippers were instructed to open the church windows so those outside could hear the service.

Weiss was called to Sandy Hook’s firehouse to console parents of the children killed at the school.

“This is Newtown. This is a town where families choose to live because it’s safe,” Weiss said.

Chris Daly, 15, stood in the cold outside the church in a daze.

“It’s all in a jumble,” he said.

Daly was in class at Newtown High School when a lockdown was ordered.

“I thought it was a drill, but they said it was real,” he said. “A lot of people skipped classes and cried and talked.”

He wondered if his community could ever recover.

“It’s going to be another world,” Chris said. “Everything is going to be so different.”

“It helps to grieve as a community. It’s an unspeakable tragedy. We need each other.”

Anne Vogel,
of Newtown

Nearby, a mother of a child who attends another school interrupted a television interview to join a recitation of Hail Mary.

At the front of the church, 27 white candles were lit for each of the victims of the shooter, who took his own life at the school.

“I used to say I’m from Sandy Hook,” said Frederika Leete, a member of the church’s choir and an occupational therapist from town.

Leete said people would often get her section of Newtown confused.

“Sandy Hook, New Jersey?” Now, they’ll know where I’m from,” she said.

Kerry Pettinelli brought her two daughters, Grace, a sixth-grader (not at Sandy Hook) and Lauren, a sophomore at Newtown High School, to the service.

“It’s terrible, that’s why we had to come,” she said. “This is one of the safest towns there is. It’s like a Norman Rockwell town.”

The Rev. Mark Nordskog, pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in neighboring Brookfield, came to offer his support.

A number of his parishioners live in Newtown.

“Just everybody is hurt by this,” he said. “I talked to a lady whose son is best friends with a child who was shot.”

What could you say? Nordskog was at a loss: “I don’t have an easy answer for that.”

Danny Barrett, a Newtown resident of 22 years, was incredulous.

“People ask me if I’m surprised it happened in Newtown,” he said. “I’m surprised it happened anywhere. I grew up in the

Bronx and I’d be surprised if it happened there.”

Barrett struggled to comprehend the mindset of the gunman.

“What drove him to shoot up the school?” he said. “We’ll probably never know.”

The mourners sang “Be Not Afraid,” and “Amazing Grace.”

In the lobby of the church, several posters were displayed on easels with remembrances.

One of them said, “Heaven gained 20 angels today.”

“Violence, violence, violence,” Weiss said.

Robert Paolini drove up from Stratford with his girlfriend and two sons, Max, 9, and Sam, 8.

A friend’s nephew escaped the school unharmed.

“It’s scary,” Paolini said.

“It’s right around Christmas. You don’t know what drives people to this point.”

Grief-stricken residents shivered in the 30-degree temperatures near a manger scene outside the church.

Kevin McManus, 22, a student at the University of Connecticut from Newtown, bundled up in a blanket.

His mother is a teacher’s assistant at another school.

“She’s pretty distraught,” he said. “She definitely knew some of the people that worked there.”

Frank Santora, pastor of Faith Church in New Milford, stood outside the memorial service wearing ear warmers.

“I know that we had a couple of parishioners whose kids go there,” he said.

“It’s quite surreal. Just who would have thought Newtown?”

Friends Anne Vogel, of Newtown, and Marshall Odeen, of Ridgefield, stood at edge of the crowd outside the front entrance holding candles.

“It helps to grieve as a community,” Vogel said. “It’s an unspeakable tragedy. We need each other.”

Gary Seri, who owns the Stone River Grille near the school, attended the service.



“We knew the principal,” said Seri, with his 13-year-old son Noah at his side. “It’s just a nightmare. I pass the school 10 times a day.”

Dr. Ed Schork, a clinical child psychologist from Danbury, was also drawn to the service.

“I came out if a profound sense of sadness,” Schork said. “I can imagine how painful it is for the parents of the children. This is one of the most insensible, deranged and horrible things

I’ve seen in 30 years of practicing.”

Worshippers also included Gov. Dannel P. Malloy, U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., and Sen.-elect Christopher Murphy, who currently represents Newtown in the U.S. House.

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Above, people gather for a memorial service and vigil at St. Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church in Newtown on Friday after shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School. At top, Joanna Rus, 5, and her brother, Julian, 8, of Southbury, hold candles outside the church.

TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN

State’s gun laws of no avail in rampage

By Ken Dixon

HARTFORD — The bloody massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School has rekindled the national debate on gun control that flares after every major incident around the country, but eventually dies down with little or no action.

In fact, Connecticut has among the strictest gun-control laws in the nation.

But they didn’t stop 20-year-old Adam Lanza from his murderous, psychotic

rampage that started in his mother’s house on Yogananda Street, where he apparently killed 52-year-old Nancy Lanza, then drove her car to the school, where he methodically executed teachers, administrators and a classroom of kindergartners.

State Police were mum Friday on the details of the mid-morning rampage during which Lanza wore black clothing and body armor. He had two handguns and an assault-style rifle, ac-

cording to the Associated Press.

But virtually everything Lanza did was illegal.

People aren’t allowed to possess firearms until they’re 21. Body armor is prohibited in the state and assault-style weapons have been illegal since 1993.

While homeowners and business owners are allowed to have handguns without permits, anyone carrying a handgun must have a state permit in a two-part process, first

through local officials who investigate the applicants, then issues 60-day permits in advance of the requisite renewable five-year state permit issued from the Department of Public Safety (DPS). Those denied permits may appeal to the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners.

Carrying a handgun without a permit is punishable by imprisonment for up to five years and a fine of up to \$1,000, with a one-year mandatory minimum

sentence in the absence of mitigating circumstances, according to state law.

Between January 2005 through December 2009, the DPS issued 44,912 new permits, for an average of 8,982 per year. It revoked 4,904 permits, about 981 per year.

The four major reasons cited by the DPS for permit revocation were that the applicant was under a protection order; was found to be unsuitable to possess firearms; had a pending

criminal charge pending; or was the subject of a restraining order.

A variety of reasons can prevent someone from obtaining a weapons permit, including mental problems; convicted felons and those convicted of serious juvenile offenses, assaults and drug offenses.

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Jessica Hill/Associated Press

Law enforcement personnel canvass the area around Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown after shootings at the school on Friday.

New calls for gun control in wake of shootings

By Dan Freedman

WASHINGTON — The shooting rampage in Newtown reignited the long-dormant debate over the place of firearms in American society, with gun-control advocates and political leaders demanding solutions to gun violence, but stopping short of proposing sweeping new legislation.

“I hope and trust that in the next session of Congress there will be sustained and thoughtful debate about America’s gun culture and our responsibility to prevent more loss of life,” said Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., author of a 1994 assault weapons ban, which lapsed in 2004.

President Barack Obama brushed away tears as he offered condolences to the families of the victims.

“We’re going to have to come together and take meaningful action to prevent more tragedies like this, regardless of the politics,” the president said.

Feinstein’s assault weapons ban was adopted in the outraged aftermath

“Calling for ‘meaningful action’ is not enough. We need immediate action. We have heard all the rhetoric before.”

Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City

of the 101 California St. shooting spree in San Francisco in 1993. Eight people were fatally shot before the gunman took his own life. The ban outlawed 19 types of military-style rifles as well as high-capacity ammunition magazines. Feinstein has called for re-introduction of an “updated” assault weapons ban.

But Friday’s horrific slaughter did not, at least on the day of the attack, stir politicians to insist on tighter controls over the sale of weapons. Even gun-control organizations like the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence merely called for a

discussion.

“We’re a better country than this,” said Brian Malte of the Brady Campaign. “We’re optimistic that the American people have had enough. We’re optimistic the American public wants to have this conversation, that voices of Americans will be heard throughout the country after what happened today.”

Obama’s spokesman, Jay Carney, responded to questions about gun control by saying “I don’t think today is that day” for such a discussion.

But New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, an advocate for gun restrictions, said now is exactly the time to act: “Calling for ‘meaningful action’ is not enough. We need immediate action. We have heard all the rhetoric before.”

Gun-rights advocates for the most part were mute. The National Rifle Association did not return a phone call seeking comment.

The National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade organization for U.S. gun manufacturers, importers, wholesalers and re-

“I hope and trust that in the next session of Congress there will be sustained and thoughtful debate about America’s gun culture and our responsibility to prevent more loss of life.”

U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., author of a 1994 assault weapons ban that lapsed in 2004

tailers, has its headquarters in Newtown. It released a statement saying “our hearts go out to the families of the victims of this horrible tragedy in our community.” But spokesman Michael Bazinet declined further comment “out of respect for the families, the community and the ongoing police investigation.”

The guns recovered at the scene, two pistols and a semi-automatic rifle, are the types that have become standard weapons of recent mass-shooting incidents. The two pistols, a Glock and a Sig Sauer, are popular with law enforcement officers and the military.

The semi-automatic rifle, a variation of the AR-15 (which is itself modeled on

the U.S. military’s Vietnam-era standard M-16), is made by Bushmaster in Ilion, N.Y. Capable of holding a 30-round magazine, it was the weapon of choice of the D.C. sniper, John Allen Muhammad, who was executed in Virginia for his reign of terror in 2002 in which he killed 10 victims at random along with his young accomplice, Lee Boyd Malvo.

Because the Connecticut shooter, Adam Lanza, killed so many people in such a short time, firearms experts wondered whether he used high-capacity magazines — the kind favored by James Holmes in his movie theater shooting spree in Aurora, Colo., last July, where 12 people were killed.

Six states, including California and New York, either ban or limit the use of high-capacity magazines.

Most models of the Glock and Sig Sauer have a normal magazine capacity of up to 15 rounds, according to the manufacturer’s websites. With larger magazines, the capacity can rise above 30 rounds.

Tom Diaz, a senior policy analyst at the Violence Policy Center, which advocates for gun control, said shooters of such weapons don’t need high-capacity magazines to inflict incredible damage.

“Whether Glock or Sig Sauer, it’s the number of rounds and ease of reloading that makes them so lethal,” he said. “If you can reload and you have 4-5 magazines, you’ve got firepower to unload a hundred rounds.”

With such weapons, Diaz said, a mass murderer doesn’t “need a hundred-round drums” similar to what Holmes used in Aurora.

The Associated Press contributed to this report. dan@hearstdc.com

Emergency radio record shows chaos, anxious exchanges

Staff reports

NEWTOWN — Police radio chatter from the minutes following the initial call about reports of shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School just after 9:30 a.m. Friday depict a chaotic

scene that reveals its horror in snatches of anxious exchanges.

“Caller is indicating she thinks there’s someone shooting in the building,” a dispatcher says on the audio, obtained by the Hearst Connecticut News-

papers. “... The front glass has been broken — they are unsure why.”

“Last known gunshots were in the front of the building,” an officer says after arriving at the school.

“I’ve got bodies here, but uh — get ambulances,” says

a breathless officer.

The same voice says, “Be advised, we should have multiple weapons, including long rifles and shotgun. ... We need buses (ambulances) here ASAP — call Danbury if you have to.”

Near the end of the audio

clip, the dispatcher asks, “What is the number of ambulances you will require?”

The grim answer: “They don’t know. They are not giving us a number.”

One officer says a UConn ambulance is en route, and is advised that a teacher and

a group of children have been found in a closet in the school’s kitchen. “There’s a teacher and eight-some kids there.”

“The scene is not active, not active at this time,” a dispatcher says. “Reduce your speed but continue.”